

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. to 18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A protective layer transfer sheet for use in providing ~~the~~ an image forming method ~~according to any one of claims 1 to 18.~~ comprising the steps of:

providing a print output by a nonsilver photographic color hard copy recording system;

providing a protective layer transfer sheet comprising a thermally transferable protective layer having a single or multi-layer structure separably provided on a substrate sheet;

putting the print and the protective layer transfer sheet on top of each other and thermally transferring the protective layer onto an image in the print so as to cover at least the printed portion in the print; and

separating the substrate sheet from the protective layer transfer sheet.

20. (Currently Amended) A record comprising a protective layer provided on the image of ~~the~~ a print by ~~the~~ an image

~~forming method according to any one of claims 1 to 18~~ comprising
the steps of:

providing a print output by a nonsilver photographic color
hard copy recording system;

providing a protective layer transfer sheet comprising a
thermally transferable protective layer having a single or
multi-layer structure separably provided on a substrate sheet;

putting the print and the protective layer transfer sheet
on top of each other and thermally transferring the protective
layer onto an image in the print so as to cover at least the
printed portion in the print; and

separating the substrate sheet from the protective layer
transfer sheet.

21. (Currently Amended) A record produced by ~~the~~ an image
~~forming method according to any one of claims 1 to 18~~ comprising
the steps of:

providing a print output by a nonsilver photographic color
hard copy recording system;

providing a protective layer transfer sheet comprising a thermally transferable protective layer having a single or multi-layer structure separably provided on a substrate sheet;

putting the print and the protective layer transfer sheet on top of each other and thermally transferring the protective layer onto an image in the print so as to cover at least the printed portion in the print; and

separating the substrate sheet from the protective layer transfer sheet, the record having a specular glossiness at 45 degrees in the range of 70 to 110% according to JIS Z 8741.

22. (Original) An image forming method comprising the steps of:

providing a protective layer transfer sheet comprising a thermally transferable protective layer having a single or multi-layer structure separably provided on a substrate sheet;

providing a print output by a nonsilver photographic color hard copy recording system;

putting the protective layer transfer sheet onto the print and thermally transferring the protective layer onto an image in the print so as to cover at least the printed portion; and

separating the substrate sheet from the protective layer transfer sheet to form an image provided with a protective layer,

the specular glossiness of the image provided with the protective layer being 65 to 110% as measured in the angle range of 45 to 75 degrees according to JIS Z 8741.

23. (Original) An image forming method comprising the steps of:

providing a protective layer transfer sheet comprising a thermally transferable protective layer having a single or multi-layer structure separably provided on a substrate sheet;

providing a print output by a nonsilver photographic color hard copy recording system;

putting the protective layer transfer sheet onto the print and thermally transferring the protective layer onto an image in the print so as to cover at least the printed portion; and

separating the substrate sheet from the protective layer transfer sheet to form an image provided with a protective layer,

the image in the print being a record of magenta gradation, the difference between the maximum value and the minimum value of the specular glossiness in the whole gradation region of the image provided with the protective layer after the transfer of the protective layer being not more than 20% at 45 degrees as measured according to JIS Z 8741.

24. (Original) An image forming method comprising the steps of:

providing a protective layer transfer sheet comprising a thermally transferable protective layer having a single or multi-layer structure separably provided on a substrate sheet;

providing a print output by a nonsilver photographic color hard copy recording system;

putting the protective layer transfer sheet onto the print and thermally transferring the protective layer onto an image in the print so as to cover at least the printed portion; and

separating the substrate sheet from the protective layer transfer sheet to form an image provided with a protective layer,

the image in the print being a record of magenta gradation, the difference between the maximum value and the minimum value of the specular glossiness in the whole gradation region of the image provided with the protective layer after the transfer of the protective layer as measured at 45 degrees according to JIS Z 8741 being not more than 50% of the difference between the maximum value and the minimum value of the specular glossiness in the whole gradation region of the image provided with the protective layer before the transfer of the protective layer as measured at 45 degrees according to JIS Z 8741.

25. (Currently Amended) The image forming method according to ~~any one of claims 22 to 24~~ claim 22, wherein the nonsilver photographic color hard copy recording system is any one of an electrophotographic recording system, an ink jet recording system, and a thermal transfer recording system.

26. (Currently Amended) The image forming method according to ~~any one of claims 22 to 24~~ claim 22, wherein, in the protective layer transfer sheet, the thermally transferable protective layer contains an ultraviolet absorber.

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27. (Currently Amended) A protective layer transfer sheet for use in providing the image forming method according to any ~~one of claims 22 to 24~~ claim 22.

28. (Currently Amended) A record comprising a protective layer provided on an image in a print by the image forming method according to any ~~one of claims 22 to 24~~ claim 22.

29. to 35. (Canceled)